

SEP 07 2006

Docket No. 740819-1038

Serial No. 10/684,188

Page 6

REMARKS

The Official Action dated June 8, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, claims 1 and 3 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regard as the invention. As previously, claims 1-3 and 5 are presently pending in the instant application.

With reference now to the Official Action and particularly page 2 thereof, claims 1-3 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,467,801 issued to Preisler et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,595,543 issued to Desprez. This rejection is respectfully traversed in that the combination proposed by the Examiner neither discloses nor suggests that which is presently set forth by Applicants' claimed invention.

As can be seen from the foregoing amendments, each of independent claims 1 and 3 have been amended to more clearly define that which Applicants regard as the invention. Particularly, each of these claims have been amended to recite a rupturable groove that is provided on the bottom sides of the panel main body, and is ruptured during deployment of the air bag, faces the back up section. It is respectfully submitted that the combination proposed by the Examiner fails to disclose this feature.

In rejecting Applicants' claimed invention, the Examiner states that Preisler et al. does not disclose ... a groove that is provided on the bottom side of the panel main body and faces the back up section. The Examiner goes on to state, however, that Desprez does disclose ... a groove (formed by the top 36 of the ribs 36) as provided on the bottom side of the panel main body and faces the back up section. It is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a groove provided on the bottom side of the panel main body in order to reinforce the connection between the back up section and the door section. While Applicants clearly disagree with the

SEP 07 2006

Docket No. 740819-1038

Serial No. 10/684,188


Page 7

Examiner in this regard, in order to expedite prosecution in the instant application, as noted hereinabove, each of independent claims 1 and 3 have been amended to recite that the groove in accordance with Applicants' claimed invention is a rupturable groove that is provided on the bottom side of the panel main body and is ruptured during deployment of the air bag and faces the back up section. Clearly, the patent to Desprez fails to disclose or remotely suggest this feature. That is, the groove set forth by Desprez is disposed so as to be part of the back up section and does not face the back up section. Moreover, the groove of Desprez referred to by the Examiner clearly is not a rupturable groove which is to be ruptured during deployment of the air bag. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claimed invention as set forth in claims 1-3 and 5 clearly distinguishes over the combination proposed by the Examiner and is in proper condition for allowance.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1-3 and 5 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,


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